

A STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF THE
ARTE NUEVO DE HAZER COMEDIAS EN ESTE TIEMPO
OF LOPE DE VEGA TO HIS OWN PLAYS

by

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PREFACE

The following study of Lope de Vega's plays has been based to as great an extent as possible upon the text of the edition of his Obras made by Menéndez y Pelayo for the Real Academia Española de la Lengua. For those plays not included in this edition, that of Hartzenbusch in the Biblioteca de autores españoles has been used. When not otherwise noted, the date given for a play is that ascribed to it by Menéndez y Pelayo in the Obras. The sources of the dates of the others will be found in parentheses in the footnotes to the passages in which the plays are first mentioned. The edition of the Arte nuevo de hazer comedias en este tiempo is that of Morel-Fatio in the Bulletin Hispanique, Vol. III. The order of the subject matter in the paragraphs of the introduction follows that of the original text but has been changed somewhat in the succeeding chapters in order to permit the grouping of related material in the same general divisions.

For aid in bringing this treatise to its present form, the writer is under especial obligation to Professor Arthur L. Owen, by whom the subject was suggested and under whose direction the study has been conducted. Acknowledgment is also made of indebtedness to Professor S. L. Whitcomb for his valuable suggestions and encouragement and to all other instructors of the University of Kansas who have given assistance.

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A Study of the Application of the
Arte nuevo de hazer comedias en este tiempo
of Lope de Vega to his own Plays

Introduction

It is the object of this study, based on an examination of thirty of Lope de Vega's plays, to establish that his Arte nuevo de hazer comedias en este tiempo,¹ written in 1609, was a serious expression of dramatic ideals which he followed before that date and more completely realized in his later comedias. He confesses that they were suggested, if not determined, by popular taste, but certain critics refuse to allow him thus to shift all responsibility, and assert that popular taste was influenced at least as much by his plays as his theories were affected by it.² It is true that he repeatedly fails

1 Morel-Fatio: L' "Arte nuevo de hazer comedias en este tiempo." Bulletin Hispanique, 1904, Vol. III, p. 365.

2 See Camille le Senne et Guillot de Saix: Lope de Vega, Paris, 1912, pp. 29 ff.

to observe his own rules, but the comedias by which he is best known, such as, for example, La estrella dē Sevilla and El castigo sin venganza, are those which most closely follow them. No single play furnishes applications of all the rules, but as some are presented in each comedia included in this study, one may reasonably hope to find them all applied within a comparatively small group.

Critics have differed widely in their interpretation of Lope's purpose in writing this dissertation. It is the opinion, however, of most commentators that it was composed hastily and that even the versification lacks his usual ease and fluency. The two French critics just cited affirm that the meter shows that it was not a collection of rules given solemnly (solennell^ement), for if it were, tercets would have been used. They add, however, that in spite of this apparent carelessness in their expression, Lope's ideals were accepted by his contemporaries¹. Morel-Fatio accuses him of neglecting to mention some of the earlier playwrights to whom he was indebted and of keeping all the credit of the New Art for himself². Fitzmaurice-Kelly in

1 Ibid.

2 See Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 370.

his History of Spanish Literature says that Lope de Vega " laid down rules which in practice he flouted; for he realized that the business of the scene is to hold an audience, is to interest, to surprise and to move ¹". In his Chapters on Spanish Literature, the same writer declares that the only approach to dramatic principle in the Arte nuevo de hacer comedias is a matter of course approval of the unity of action, the necessity of which has never ² been doubted by any playwright who knows his business ²".

All critics, however, have not been so harsh in their judgment of the only existing statement by Lope himself of his dramatic principles ³. Iriarte considers it a new art of criticizing comedies, embodying an ideal which it was perhaps impossible to realize absolutely, but which might be approached, and by which the irregularity and extravagance of the stage might be censured,- rather than a new art of writing

1 Fitzmaurice-Kelly: History of Spanish Literature, New York, 1912. p. 258.

2 Fitzmaurice-Kelly: Chapters on Spanish Literature, London, 1908. p. 178

3 The more elaborate treatise, which Montalban, writing in 1632, said that Lope de Vega had prepared and would publish soon, had never been found. See Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 373.

¹ them . Antonio Cánovas del Castillo also emphasizes the idealistic nature of the Arte nuevo, comparing it to the stil nuovo in Italy . ² Morel-Fatio criticizes it severely, but concludes that it contains certain data by which one may get a fairly well defined idea of Lope's conception ³ of the comedia nueva .

⁴ The text consists of three hundred and eighty nine lines of blank verse, divided into unequal paragraphs and ending in two rimed couplets. It was written, Lope says, in answer to a request from the Academy of Madrid that he give them a dissertation on the art of writing ⁵ popular comedias . The following analysis will concern

1 Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto: Bosquejo histórico-crítico de la poesía castellana en el siglo XVIII. Biblioteca de autores castellanos, Vol. LXI, pp. lxi-lxii.

2 Antonio Cánovas del Castillo: Prólogo general del tomo I de los autores dramáticos contemporáneos y joyas del teatro español del siglo XIX, Madrid, 1881. p. v.

3 ... une idée assez complète de la façon dont le grand poète a conçu la comedia nueva. Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 368.

4 Edition of Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 365.

5 " This ' Academy of Madrid ' was probably a poetical gathering at the house of some nobleman, in imitation of the academies that had long been popular in Italy. It may be the same Academy, as la Barrera remarks, which Lope mentioned many years afterwards in the dedication of his Laurel de Apolo-" Rennert: Life of Lope de Vega, Philadelphia, 1904, p. 179, n.

itself in detail only with those parts of the text which explicitly state the new principles.

11. 1-48 In the opening paragraphs Lope protests against the making of rules by an author who had violated all the established principles of art. He suggests that possibly the old rules are not artistic, but he asserts that he violates them only because he believes that the people who pay for a show should have what pleases them. Indeed, he finds it necessary when writing to lock them up with six keys and to take Plautus and Terence from his study to keep them from shouting the truth at him.

11. 48-156 He follows with a brief history of the Spanish theater of earlier times and an explanation of the classic principles, with the implication that he has not been the only offender against them. He declares that the real comedia should imitate the actions of men and depict the customs of the age. His conclusion is that contemporary comedy should follow a middle course between the old ideas and the taste of the majority of the theater-goers.

11. 156-173 The first point considered in the new comedia¹ is the subject. Lope says it may deal with kings, a return

1 Morel-Fatio wonders why traza, the technical term for the content of a play, was not used here instead of sujeto. Op. cit., p. 388, n. 157.

to the ancient comedy, for Plautus even introduced gods into his plays.

11. 173-187 He advises an intermingling of tragedy and comedy for the sake of variety, but makes up for this revolt against classicism by expressing his approval of the unity of action. He says care should be taken that there be but one plot and that no episodes be introduced which are not necessary to the principal action.

11. 187-210 Unity of time is less kindly dealt with. It is not necessary, in Lope's opinion, that the action be represented as taking place in the space of a day, even though Aristotle did advise it. The time covered should be the least possible except in the case of historical plays. In them it may be necessary for years to pass, and the long intervals should come between the acts. The wrath of a Spaniard at a theater is not appeased if everything from Genesis to the Day of Judgment is not enacted before his eyes in two hours, and the device that succeeds is the best.

11. 210-230 The next paragraph, which says that the story should be written in prose, is interpreted to mean¹ that the plot should first be briefly outlined in prose.

1 El sugeto elegido escriba en prosa,
etc..

Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 379, l. 211

It should be divided into three acts, if possible the end of a day's action coming at the end of an act. Lope credits Virués with being the first to put plays into three acts. Lope's earliest comedies consisted of four, with three short entremeses, one between each two acts. According to later practices only a dance might be permitted and its appropriateness is questioned.

11. 230-239 The plot should be divided into two well connected parts; however, the solution should not be evident till near the end, lest the interest of the audience flag.

11. 239-246 The stage should not be left vacant long because the audience becomes restless during the intervals . 1

11. 246-279 Ordinary affairs should be discussed in clear

1 Quede muy pocas vezes el teatro
 Sin persona que hable, porque el vulgo
 En aquellas distancias se inquieta
 Y gran rato la fabula se alarga,
 Que, fuera de ser esto un gran vicio,
 Aumenta mayor gracia y artificio.

The last two lines of this paragraph, contradictory when translated literally, have been translated by Damas Hinard thus: " Et outre que cela est un grand vice, l'éviter c'est ajouter à une composition de l'art et de la grâce", but Morel-Fatio says that to get this meaning from it, which is probably the correct one, something must be supplied which is not in the original and is equivalent to l'éviter. Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 379.

and simple language and the actual conversation of real people imitated. When someone persuades, counsels, or dissuades, the diction should be more elevated. By no means should the ordinary conversation resemble written language, because if it were real it would not contain expressions common to poetry or mythology. When a king speaks, let him imitate as much as possible royal gravity. An old man should be modestly eloquent. The conversation of lovers should stir the hearers and soliloquies should be especially expressive. The actor should be transformed and the audience carried away with him. Let him question and answer himself, but if he voice complaint he should always keep due respect for women.

11. 279-283 The women should not do or say unwomanly things and if they change costumes, as they may do, for the masculine disguise usually pleases, they should do so modestly.

11. 283-293 ^m~~Im~~possibilities should be avoided, for it is a maxim that only the probable may be imitated, nor should characters of low rank concern themselves with things above their station. By no means should a character be permitted to contradict himself as Sophocles allows ~~C~~Edipus to do when

he fails to remember having killed Laius with his own hand¹.

11. 293-297 The scenes should end gracefully with a moral proverb, witty saying or elegant verses to leave a pleasant impression on the audience.

11. 297-304 The first act should contain the situation and the second should involve the plot so that no one can decide how it is solved till near the middle of the third. Episodes should end contrary to the expectations of the audience.

11. 304-312 The verses should be wisely suited to the subject matter. Décimas are appropriate for complaints; sonetos are well suited to the speech of those waiting; narrative demands romances or octavas; tercetos are for serious things; and redondillas for love.

11. 312-318 Figures of speech are considered very important and repetition, anadiplosis, anáfora, irony, dubitación, apostrophe and exclamation are particularly recommended.

11. 318-326 Deceiving with the truth is a device quite popular, of which Lope recognizes Miguel Sánchez as the inventor. Equivocal speeches with their double meanings are also well liked by the people because they think that they alone understand what is being said.

1 Edipus, a tragedy of Sophocles.

11. 326-337 Questions of honor are good themes because they touch every one deeply. They should be accompanied by virtuous actions, for virtue is everywhere loved. The traitor should be so hated by all that he should receive no favors and should be avoided by every one. The loyal character on the other hand, should be honored and loved by all and be rewarded by the influential.

11. 337-340 Each act should fill but four sheets (pliegos).

11. 340-355 Satire should not be clear and evident. In Greece and Italy comedies were for a time prohibited because of the character of the satire. An attack should never arouse hatred.

11. 355-376 Lope criticizes very severely the costuming used by actors. He says Turks sometimes appear attired as Christians, and Romans in modern dress. He concludes charitably, however, by saying that no one can be more of a barbarian than he, for he has dared to lay down rules that are contrary to art and is himself called an ignorant person in France and Italy.

11. 376-389 Some Latin verse referring to the stage as the mirror of life follows and the conclusion is made that one may learn all to be known about the art by listening to comedias.

I

Subject. Tragedy and comedy. One plot divided into two parts, no episodes. Solution. Unity of time. Unity of place not mentioned or observed. Length of plays. Costuming.

Lope says the new comedias may deal with kings and introduces them frequently into those that he has written. In fifteen of the plays studied, kings figure as more or less important characters, the percentage increasing slightly among those written after 1609. La estrella de Sevilla,¹ La niña de plata,² Las famosas asturianas³ and El mejor alcalde, el rey⁴ are among the best and most widely known in which royalty appears. However, El acero de Madrid⁵ and El castigo sin venganza⁶ are equally good plays which concern

1 La estrella de Sevilla; probably written after 1614. Menéndez y Pelayo; Obras de Lope de Vega publicadas por la real academia española, Vol. IX, p. 127.

2 La niña de plata; published in 1618. Op. cit., p. 319.

3 Las famosas asturianas; written before 1618. Obras VII, p.185

4 El mejor alcalde, el rey; published in 1635. One of the later comedias. Obras VIII, p. 295.

5 El acero de Madrid; 1603 (Ticknor; History of Spanish Literature, Vol. II, p. 245, n. 40.), Biblioteca de autores españoles. Vol XXIV, p. 365.

6 El castigo sin venganza; published in 1631. Obras XV, p.233.

themselves entirely with people of lesser rank. These royal personages are seldom represented as infallible sources of wisdom and justice, but are decidedly human characters who may and frequently do, make mistakes. Don Sancho, el Bravo, intrigues against the honor of Estrella and finally causes the death of her brother, a faithful¹ subject. The royal characters figuring in La niña de plata are but little better, and the king in Lo cierto por lo dudoso² plays the unenviable rôle of a disappointed suitor. Even the renowned Alfonso el Casto is too cowardly to refuse to surrender the hundred asturianas exacted as tribute by the Moors³. The peasant king, Bamba, is a good man but absolutely at the mercy of court intrigue⁴. Don Alfonso VII, king of Castile and Leon, however, is an ideal monarch, and the loftiest character in the play. He judges fairly⁵ and executes his judgments inexorably. Neither is there a departure from the traditional ideas of kingly character or authority in the action of the Irish monarch in La fuerza

1 La estrella de Sevilla.

2 Lo cierto por lo dudoso; published in 1625. Obras IX, p.365.

3 Las famosas asturianas.

4 La comedia de Bamba; 1604. Obras VII, p. 39.

5 El mejor alcalde, el rey.

lastimosa, who in order that his daughter may marry the duke, orders that unfortunate man to kill his wife ¹.

If Lope's plays were written to please the public, comedy must have been more popular than tragedy. Seven of the plays studied,-- most of them published after 1609 --, end with the death of one or more of the principal characters. They are, El sol parado, La comedia de Bamba, El médico de su honra, Lo que ha de ser, Porfiar hasta morir, El caballero de Olmedo, and El castigo sin venganza. La estrella de Sevilla may be included in the same group, for the murder of Estrella's brother in the second act ruins the happiness of the two chief characters. La moza de cántaro ⁷ contains elements of tragedy and comedy, with the emphasis on the latter. The heroine avenges her father's honor by killing one of her suitors and yet in the end finds happiness herself. None of these tragicomedias is

1 La fuerza lastimosa; published in 1612 (Hennigs: Studien zu Lope de Vega Carpio, Gottingen, 1891.). Obras XIV, p. 157.

2 El sol parado; written before 1604. Obras IX, p. 39.

3 El médico de su honra; published in 1633. Obras IX, p. 405.

4 Lo que ha de ser; 1624 (Rennert: Lope de Vega, p. 516.). B.A.E. XXXIV, p. 507

5 Porfiar hasta morir; one of the later plays. Obras X, p. 73.

6 El caballero de Olmedo; 1614. Obras X, p. 149.

7 La moza de cántaro; 1632 (Rennert, Op. cit., p. 520.). B.A.E. XXIv, p. 549.

wholly lacking in humor. The chief comic element is the character of the gracioso, first introduced by Lope, prior to 1604, in La francesilla¹. Rennert considers the absence or existence of a gracioso in a play one clue to the date of its composition², but he adds, "It is not however to be understood that Lope after inventing the gracioso, introduced this character into all his subsequent pieces. Proof to the contrary is afforded by El bastardo Mudarra which exists in an autograph dated 1612, and has no figura de donaire". It is his opinion that other plays on historical subjects and some of the tragicomedias lack a comic personage because of the desire of the author to preserve their wholly tragic character. Las famosas asturianas is given as an example of the historical play. Rennert continues, "Moreover it should be observed that even when graciosos are introduced into plays of this kind, Lope presents these characters most discreetly. He never allows them to degenerate into impertinence, as did other dramatists of this period in their serious plays: and as Calderon, and his contemporaries, did in a still greater measure". He says the jests are few and allotted to plebeians

1 Rennert, Hugo Albert: The Life of Lope de Vega. Philadelphia 1904, p. 488.

The exact date of La francesilla is unknown, but there is a gracioso in El maestro de danzar, an autograph play dated 1594. B.A.E. XXXIV, p. 71.

2 Rennert: Op. cit., p. 489.

and the comic characters are frequently servants ¹.

The gracioso appears in Porfiar hasta morir, El médico de su honra, El caballero de Olmedo, El castigo sin venganza, and La estrella de Sevilla, but his wit is never inappropriate and grows less conspicuous towards the end of the play. The servant, Galindo, in El médico de su honra fails to recognize the king and addresses him impertinently.

Rey. Un hombre está allí. ¿Quién es ?

¿Cómo habeis venido aquí ?

Galindo. Con los pies, y porque ví

²
Abierta la puerta .

Galindo's wit, however, is eliminated several scenes before the actual occurrence of the tragedy by his summary dismissal on a charge of disloyalty. The first two acts of El caballero de Olmedo are full of jokes and witticisms, but one feels, as Menéndez y Pelayo suggests ³, a fatalistic shadow that weighs upon the characters and restrains their

1 Id.

2 Obras IX, p. 415, c. B, l.35.

3 Obras X, p. lxxxvii.

merriment. In El castigo sin venganza the lackey is wisely¹ quieted near the end of the play. The closing lines of La estrella de Sevilla, however, are pronounced by a gracioso who in the first act speaks facetiously of the beautiful heroine.

Clarindo. Por esta estrella hermosa
 Morimos como huevos estrellados
 Mejor fuera en tortilla.²

As the comic element should appear in an ideal tragedy, according to the New Art, so there should be some tragedy in a comedy. In some of Lope's pure comedies, the gracioso does not appear,-- possibly because his witty sayings are not necessary in a play in which none of the characters is very serious-, and the element of uncertainty, with the suggestion of a tragic ending, not, however, realized, subdues in many of them the general atmosphere of gaiety. In the historical plays and those of the capa y espada type, the possibility of tragedy seems to be almost always present, and in some cases there is an actual portrayal

1 Obras XV, p.264, c. B, l. 29. The last humorous speech.

2 Obras IX, p. 136, c. A, l. 41.

of it. ¹ El molino has no comic character, and the rivalry of the three suitors, one of whom is obliged to go in disguise to save himself from royal jealousy, continually augurs violence. In Lope's earliest comedy, El verdadero amante, ² the peaceful happiness of shepherds is disturbed by jealous plots. Jacinto is falsely accused of murder and his innocence is not proven until, as the alcaldes are taking him away to prison and probable execution, Coridon confesses that it has all been a conspiracy. In La fuerza lastimosa the suspense occasioned by the announcement that Isabella must be killed because a half-crazy princess wants to marry her husband, is only relieved by her final mastery of the situation. It does not seem inartistic for Doña María in La moza de cántaro to kill the man who has insulted her father. El nuevo mundo descubierto por ³ Cristóbal Colón is made serious by the hardships of the voyage and the mutiny of the sailors. The timely arrival of the Spaniards in America cuts short the threats of two quarreling Indians. ⁴ La envidia de la nobleza is almost

1 El molino; 1604 (Hennig: Op. cit., p. 73.). B.A.E. XXIV, p. 21.

2 El verdadero amante; B.A.E. XXiv, p. 3.

3 Obras XI, p. 341. Written before 1604.

4 Obras XL, p. 1. One of later plays.

entirely an account of the jealousies and feuds between two rival families, ending with the execution of all but one of the Bencerrajes. In Pobreza no es vileza¹, the return of her angry brother endangers the life of Laura's lover. Only the alacrity of the offender in disentangling the situation prevents a tragedy. The general mourning of the friends and relatives of the famosas asturianas is relieved by the subsequent rejoicings of victory over the Moors. The play closes with the pointed remarks of the heroine, Doña Sancha, to the lover who had almost proven unworthy.

Nuño. Aquí, senado, hacen fin
De don Nuño las fazañas.

Dña. Sancha. Eso non.

Nuño. Pues ¿quién, señora ?

Dña Sancha. Las famosas asturianas².

No trace of the tragic, however, is to be found in El perro del hortelano³, in El acero de Madrid and in El maestro

1 Pobreza no es vileza; Obras XII, p. 477.

2 Las famosas asturianas; Obras VII, p. 219, c. B, l. 27.

3 El perro del hortelano; published in 1618 (Hennig). B.A.E. XXIV, p. 341.

1
de danzar for the escapades of the chief characters never get beyond the amusing. They are all admirable plays and among Lope's best productions. Each has a gracioso, and one amusing situation follows another .

Though Lope advises unity of action and Fitzmaurice-Kelly calls it a commonplace necessity, it is the most frequently violated of Lope's own rules. Ticknor credits him with the establishment of the comic underplot in the Spanish drama, giving La estrella de Sevilla as one brilliant exception and example of a play with no unnecessary complications .² The lesser plot usually runs parallel to the main argument and is concerned with friends or servants of the chief characters, depending for its final solution on the outcome of the main plot. The apparently general idea that no young woman should remain unmarried at the end of a comedy may have made necessary, in some instances, the introduction of a slight episode. The plays, however, that do consist of only one plot and have no unnecessary incidents are among the best. Some of the tragicomedias are of this type. In El médico de su honra,

1 El maestro de danzar; 1594 (autograph). B.A.E. XXXIV, p. 71.

2 Ticknor: Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 310.

every incident brings nearer the fate of the unhappy heroine. Bamba's simplicity and the royal ambition of Ervigio in La comedia de Bamba combine to work steadily towards a tragedy. Porfiar hasta morir is the uninvolved story of an affection that grew deeper the more hopeless it became. Estrella's misfortunes begin when the king first sees her. His visit to her house, his quarrel with her brother and the royal command that Busto be killed by his sister's lover are all contributing factors to the ruin of her hopes. Lo cierto por lo dudoso¹ is a good type of the comedy with but one plot. In El verdadero amante, Al pasar del arroyo² and La moza de cántaro, friends of the chief characters are involved in the minor plot. Frequently the dramatist seems to feel that all the unmarried sisters or even brothers should be provided for. In Dineros son calidad³, the two brothers win, one a princess and the other a countess. In Pobreza no es vileza a brother and sister, after exciting adventures, are each happily married. The same thing occurs in La niña de plata. The rather disconnected historical account of El sol parado has for its main theme the victory

1 Lo cierto por lo dudoso. Obras IX, p. 367.

2 Al pasar del arroyo. Published in 1619 (Hennig). B.A.E. XXIV, p. 387.

3 Dineros son calidad. B.A.E. XLI, p. 59. 1623 (Camille le Senne Y Guillot de Saix)

of the Christians over the Moors, but a parallel tragic plot culminates in the death of the Moor who after fifteen years of hardship has just won the beautiful Zaida. El remedio en la desdicha¹ also has an entirely separate subplot. In the principal one, two lovers narrowly escape paternal interference in their plans, and in the second a Moorish woman is rescued from her brutal husband by some Christian knights. Mistresses marry off their servants in some plays, notably in El perro del hortelano, but it is sometimes the complaint of the gracioso that he has been neglected. Occasionally a disappointed suitor is married to a character especially introduced for him at the end of the play. Thus a princess appears in the last scene of El molino to assuage the wounded pride of a jilted prince. El nuevo mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón has an unusual number of unnecessary episodes, due perhaps in part to the fact that Lope followed quite closely the historical facts. The central theme is the success of the expedition and the christianizing of the new world, but it has nothing whatsoever to do with the quarrels of the Indians nor with some of the adventures of the settlers.

The Arte nuevo says that the events of a plot

1 El remedio en la desdicha. Obras XI, p. 165. Appeared in 1604 and was retouched in 1620.

should fall into two well connected parts but the solution should not be evident until the end of the second. This is characteristic of all of Lope's plays. The point of division is the climax of the plot and usually comes near the end of the second act. Thus in La estrella de Sevilla, Busto is killed¹ a few scenes from the close of the second act. An important character is eliminated and the situation is changed, but the second part of the plot is indissolubly linked to the first by a sequence of events absolutely dependent upon it for their significance. Bamba's early career is one of increasing influence and advancement in position till he is absolute ruler. The climax comes when he pardons Alicán, a Moor, and Paulo, a Greek, both leaders of forces attacking his kingdom. The honors that he gives them arouses the jealousy of his own nobles and as a cause for conspiracy already exists in Ervigio's claim to the throne, his downfall is gradual but certain. In El bobo del colegio², one feels from the last scene of the second act that the Valencian disguised as a bobo will win the lady from his Salamancan rival. The same characters appear in both parts of the plot and Garcerán's scheme

1 La comedia de Bamba.

2 El bobo del colegio. B.A.E. XXIV, p. Published in 1621.
(Hennig)

planned and partially worked out in the first, is not concluded before the last scene of the last act. The king in Lo cierto por lo dudoso banishes his rival and seems to have succeeded in eliminating him from the plot, but at the end of the second act he appears in disguise. The terms of the exile did not expressly forbid his returning at night as long as he did no harm. The king is consistently foiled in all his subsequent attempts to win the lady. The marriage of the lady of whom the hero of Porfiar hasta morir is enamored ends the story as far as she is concerned, but the second part deals with the hopeless persistence of the troubadour and the jealousy of her husband. In La fuerza lastimosa the rescue of Isabela in the last scene of the second act is the turning point in the story.

Of the solution of Lope de Vega's comedias, Fitzmaurice-Kelly says, "...complicated as his plots may be (and he likes to introduce a double intrigue when the chance proffers), he exposes it at the outset with an obvious solution; but not one in twenty can guess precisely how the solution is to be attained¹". This is especially true in some of the tragic plays , in which the sense of disaster is felt from the very beginning but the events

1 Fitzmaurice-Kelly: Spanish Literature, p. 260.

causing it are not known. El castigo sin venganza, El caballero de Olmedo and El médico de su honra have this effect. One feels equally assured that the heroine of Las famosas asturianas and the lovers in El acero de Madrid will be successful, but in some more involved and serious plays it is difficult to tell just what the outcome will be until Lope chooses to disclose it. La niña de plata might as well have ended tragically as La estrella de Sevilla. In La fuerza lastimosa, the audience does not doubt that the mad princess will discover her mistake but fears that it will be too late to save the life of an innocent woman, and, her safety once assured, wonders whether she will succeed in clearing up the situation before her husband is married to the princess. The method of the solution is not evident until the end of the play. Pobreza no es vileza threatens to be tragedy until the very last scene is reached . In some cases, even when the outcome of the principal plot is evident, no one knows just what will be done with the lesser characters.

Lope assuredly follows his own rules as far as the violation of the unity of time is concerned. The action of none of these thirty plays could take place in twenty four hours. Usually the time covered is the least possible, but frequently in historical plays several

years elapse. In the case of four plays the action apparently covers only a few days, but several weeks or months are obviously necessary in most of them for the development of the plot. La fuerza lastimosa is the only non-historical play studied that covers a period of several years. It has been said that in cases where the characters change from youth to old age, the acts are absolutely separated and the whole resembles a Greek trilogy.¹ There are many plays covering several years in which the characters do not change. This is true of La comedia de Bamba. In El sol parado, however, the characters age noticeably and between two acts in Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio,² an infant grows to manhood and a youth, blinded and imprisoned, becomes a feeble old man. In El nuevo mundo etc., the acts are quite separated in both time and scene. The fact that there is a separate dramatis personae given at the beginning of each act, also suggests a Greek trilogy.

Lope ignores the unity of place both in theory and in practice. A few plays limit the scene to a certain city, others extend it to the neighboring country and villages and still others expand it to different countries.

1 Camille le Senne et Guillot de Saix: Op. cit., p. 39.

2 Obras VII

It remains for El nuevo mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón to shift the scene from Portugal to Spain, thence to the high seas and America and back again to Spain.

Each act should fill but four sheets (pliegos).

This rule, Rennert says, was followed by all other dramatists of the time and adhered to strictly by Lope in his autograph plays, the slight variations that may be found¹ being due to the difference in the size of the leaves. Although there is on occasion a difference in length of² seven hundred lines between two particular comedias, they average about three thousand lines each. The acts in each are usually of about equal length, though a variation of slightly more than three hundred lines³ is found in one instance. The shortest act of all contains just six hundred and thirty lines, and is the second in La dama boba.⁴ Any of the comedias could have been presented in from two to two and a half hours. Two hours is the limit set by the Arte nuevo for the patience of the audience while a character in La portuguesa y dicha del forastero says two hours and a half is an unusually long time for the presentation of a comedia.

1 Rennert: Life of Lope de Vega, p. 183, n. 2.

2 El verdadero amante, 2680 lines. El perro del hortelano, 3477 lines.

3 El perro del hortelano. Acts I and II.

4 B. A. E. XXIV 1613 (Aut.)

Riselo. Alguna conversación,
 Juego o Prado o la comedia
 Que de dos horas y media
 Es notable suspensión¹.

Lope says the actors should be costumed appropriately. The appearance of Turks dressed as Christians or Romans attired as Spanish gentlemen is a barbarism of the Spanish stage.

Rennert calls this criticism of Lope's very just, though the fault is not characteristic of the Spanish theater alone, and adds that , with the exception of historical plays, no attempt was made to costume the characters accurately. The most obvious distinctions - the wearing of a turban and a mantle by a Moor, a peasant costume by a labrador and a cloak and sword by a gentleman-; were made because those styles were familiar to the audience and helped to show the rank of the character.² Greeks and Romans were always in accurately costumed . Stage directions do not give very elaborate instructions

1 B.A.E. XXXIV, p. 156, c. B, l. 40.

2 Rennert: The Spanish Stage, p. 104-105 and note.

concerning the dress of the actors. A character may enter de labrador or de moro but the details of his costume seem to have been ignored by the author.

II

First draft in prose. Entremeses. Division into acts. Stage not left vacant. Ending of scenes. Exposition and complication. Episodes.

It is impossible to determine from this distance, save by contemporary comment, whether Lope actually wrote out his plays in prose before versifying them or not. I have found no such direct evidence, but More-Fatio quoting from an article in the Seminario Pintoresco presumably by Antonio Gil y Zárate, says that a manuscript has been found containing compositions of Lope's of all kinds with numerous corrections and erasures, which proves that some of his plays at least were written out first in the form of pequeñas novelás¹.

Lope refers in the Arte nuevo to the decline of the entremés as a part of a theatrical performance and the occasional substitution of a dance. The only mention

¹ Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 393.

I have found of the entremés is in a note, attached to the last act of El galan de la Mebrilla, which concerns the censoring of the play with its songs and the entremés.¹

Torres Naharro divided his plays into five acts² and Rueda merely put his into scenes. Lope says his earliest ones are in four acts and that Virués should be credited with being the first playwright to use the three-act division. All the plays that I have studied are divided into three acts. It is rather difficult in some instances to determine whether or not the end of an act marks the end of a day's action, as Lope says it should if possible, because the events sometimes follow each other without any definite reference to the hour. In La estrella de Sevilla the second act begins on the evening of the day in which most of the events of the first act occur, and its close seems to mark the end of several day's action. The second act of El acero de Madrid and both first and second acts of El mejor alcalde, el rey apparently close the events of one day.

1 Esta comedia, intitulada el Galan de la Mebrilla, se podrá representar, reservando a la vista lo que fuera de la lectura se ofreciere en la action, y lo mismo en los cantares y entremés, dando licencia el Sr. Diego Lopez de Salcedo, del Consejo Supremo del Rey nuestro señor, rubricandola su merced aquí en Madrid, a 18 de Mayo de 1615.-
Thomas Gracián Dantesco. Obras IX, p. 125, c. B.

2 Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 395.

It is difficult to say whether Lope ever intended the stage to be vacant for very long between scenes. Scenery and stage equipment of all sorts were very rude and it is possible that little delay in the changing of scenes was necessary. The stage directions which frequently read, vanse y salen etc., imply that the immediate entrance of an actor was expected on the exit of another.

Lope says that each scene should end gracefully - "scenè", in this connection, meaning an actual change of the setting. Most of his plays show a decided attempt on the part of the author to end the scenes with a moral proverb, witty saying or elegant verse. Frequently the title of the play is a proverb which is repeated or suggested at the end of one or more scenes. In Dineros son calidad, a scene ends thus:

Rufino.

Hoy una diamante he vendido
 Para vestirnos: entrad,
 Y estas glorias celebrad,
 Y decid, pues llego a veros
 Por las armas con dineros,
 Que ellos dan la calidad.¹

1 B.A.E. XLI, p. 66, c. B, l. 34.

and in Pobreza no es vileza we have this conclusion.

Mendoza. ¡Pesia, fuera de las armas,
 Al dinero ! ¡Han de ahorcar
 Al otro porque yo salga
 A dar qué mirar un día ?
 Vamos al cuerpo de guarda;
 Que pobreza no es vileza¹
 Mientras no hace cosas malas .

Again scenes may close with a proverb that has nothing to do with the title, as in La dama boba.

Laurencio. Déjame el remedio y calla;
 Porque burlar un discreto²
 Es la mayor alabanza .

The title (or parts of it) is also used to end scenes when it is not proverbial, as in El caballero de Olmedo.

1 Obras XII. p. 499, c. B, l. 16.

2 B.A.E. XXIV. p. 310, c. C, l. 20.

Florio. Déjame a mi tu suceso
 Don Alonso ha de ser tuyo;
 Que serás dichosa espero
 Con hombre que es en Castilla
 La gala de Medina¹
 La flor de Olmedo .

The device is common in La estrella de Sevilla.

Rey.
 Viva yo, y diga Castilla
 Lo que quisiere decir;
 Que, rey ciego, he de seguir²
 A la Estrella de Sevilla .

and is frequently used in La niña de plata.

Don Enrique.

Ay Arias, por aquella niña ingrata³
 Daré un gigante de la misma plata .

1 Obras X, p. 162, c. B, l. 14.

2 Obras IX, p. 134, c. B, l. 11.

3 Obras IX, p. 331, c. A, l. 14.

Lope's plays invariable end with a direct address to the audience containing the name of the play.

Rey.

Prendedlos

Y en teatro mañana
Cortad sus infames cuellos
Fin de la trágica historia
Del Caballero de Olmedo¹.

Enrique. Ya no, porque aquí ha de dar
Fin La fuerza lastimosa².

A soliloquy also seems to be favorite device of Lope's for leaving a pleasant impression on the audience, and it occurs frequently even in plays written before 1609. A scene in El molino ends thus:

Duquesa. ¡Ah, tiempo mudable y vano !

Es en balde y necesario

Formar de tu agavio quejas.

¿Qué triste suceso ha sido

1 Obras X, p. 185, c. B, l. 191.

2 Obras XV, p. 46, c. B, l. 20.

El que mi bien ha quitado ?

Siempre el más determinado

¹
Llora más arrepentido .

Several scenes in this same play end with soliloquies and the same thing may be found in La fuerza lastimosa, in El caballero de Olmedo and in several others. Sometimes a dramatic or unusually forceful speech seems to have been considered sufficient. Thus, in Lo cierto por lo dudoso Don Enrique says at the end of one scene,

Bien lo merece;

Que si por el Rey me deja,

Acierta, y es bien que acierte.

Mejor es que yo mi hermano.

²
¡Muera yo! ¡Viva quien vence !

and in La estrella de Sevilla, Busto,

Sancho Ortiz, el Rey es rey;

³
Callar , y tener paciencia .

¹ B.A.E. XXIV, p. 24, c. C, l. 13.

² Obras IX, p. 391, c. A, l. 1.

³ Obras IX, p. 136, c. A, l; 20.

Still another scheme is the use of a rimed couplet to end a scene almost entirely written in romances or blank verse¹. It does not follow, however, that all the scenes in Lope's plays are thus carefully concluded. In the third act of El perro del hortelano a very ordinary conversation closes a scene.

Ricardo. Trocóse en pena mi esperada gloria.

Federico. Yo quiero ver lo que es.

Ricardo. Yo, conde, os sigo.²

Celio. Presto veréis que la verdad os digo.

The appearance of the same character or characters as principal actors in two successive scenes sometimes occurs and produces a sort of liason between them which may or may not have been intentional. In El caballero de Olmedo, the first scene in the second act is on the street in front of Don Pedro's house. Doña Ana and Doña Inés speak off stage and open the door of the house to admit Tello. He enters. The next scene is within the house and the same characters are engaged in conversation.³

1 El maestro de danzar. B.A.E. XXIV, p. 83, c. C, l. 25.

2 B.A.E., XXIV, p. 360, c. C, l. 2.

3 Obras X, p. 163, c. B and ff.

Lope is quite consistent in having the exposition set forth in the first act. The complication follows in the second. La estrella de Sevilla is typical in this respect, for all the principal characters are introduced in the first act; Estrella, her brother, her lover, the king and the gracioso. The king is attracted by her beauty, and a servant is bribed to let him enter the house that evening. Thus the stage is immediately set for tragic or at least dramatic action. The second act, culminating in the murder of Gusto at the king's command and by the hand of Sancho, furnishes the necessary complications for the ruining of the happiness of the leading characters. Most of the third act is concerned with their attitude towards a state of affairs which it is beyond human power to remedy. The king repents and confesses his guilt. Sancho is given full pardon but loses Estrella, who withdraws, supposedly to a convent. Ménéndez y Pelayo says that the first act of Porfiar hasta morir^I is a masterly exposition of action as Lope preferred it. Macías, a student of Salamanca, exchanges books for arms and goes to Andalucia with letters of introduction to the Maestre de Calatrava. At an inn he saves the life of a gentleman

1 Obras X, p. xlviii.

attacked by bandits and discovers that it is the Maestre himself. This knight welcomes the troubadour to his home. Doña Clara in a lady-in-waiting to the Maestre's wife. Macías becomes enamored of her. She is affianced to Tello de Mendoza but encourages Macías and accepts the verses that he writes to her. In the second act Macías distinguishes himself in battle and asks the king for the hand of Clara. As arrangements have already been made for her marriage to Tello, he is refused. She also rejects his further attentions and the hopelessness of his situation is made absolutely evident when she marries Tello. He continues in the third act, however, to address verses to her, in spite of the efforts of friends to divert his attention to other things. Finally her husband in jealous desperation kills him. Menéndez y Pelayo also mentions ¹La fortuna merecida and ²Lo cierto por lo dudoso as examples of plays with splendid expositions in the first act. In the former, Alvaro Núñez enters at the beginning of the first act, a poor but noble youth, who soon distinguishes himself by saving the life of the king. Thus the theme of the play, service and its reward, is introduced at the beginning. In the latter play, the king and his brother

1 Obras IX, p. cv.

2 Obras IX, p. cxviii.

are both introduced as rivals for the hand of Doña Juana, while Doña Inés appears as Juana's rival for the affections of the brother, Don Enrique. The king believes that he is settling the whole affair by banishing Don Enrique from Sevilla. In the second act, however, Don Enrique returns secretly and communicates with Doña Juana in spite of the plots of Inés, and the king is forced to admit that he has been outwitted. The third act continues the intrigues of the two jealous characters, the king and Inés, but ends with their discomfiture; for Juana's father, in obedience to the royal command, marries his daughter to the man he finds disguised in his house. The king intends to be this person, but as Enrique appears first he wins the heroine.

In La niña de plata, Dorotea, her aunt, her brother, the prince, Don Juan and his father, El Veinticuatro, are introduced in the first act. Don Juan's courtship of Dorotea is interfered with by the objections of his father and the envy of the prince. El Veinticuatro preferred an heiress for a daughter-in-law. The second act complicates the action. Marcela appears, introducing a subplot, and the mutual suspicion and jealousy of the two chief characters of the main plot cause numerous confusions and misunderstandings. The play ends with the prince's

recognition of Dorotea's worth, the king's permission for her marriage to Don Juan and El Veinticuatro's changed attitude when he finds that she is to receive a handsome dowry from the king.

In El castigo sin venganza the first act contains the decision of the duke to please his vassals and marry Casandra. His son, Federico, rescues her from drowning as she is coming to the castle, and she is immediately attracted by the personality of the son rather than by that of the father. Federico confides to his servant his affection for Casandra. The second act portrays the development of this mutual affection aided by the coldness and frequent absences of the duke until both admit their inability to overcome it. The last act is chiefly concerned with their punishment. The duke, convinced of their guilt, arranges a plot whereby Federico, ignorant of her identity, kills Casandra as a traitor. Guards are immediately ordered to kill him for murdering his stepmother.

Lope not infrequently introduces episodes into his plots, some of them humorous and others serious, but, as is the case with his main plots, the solutions are usually surprises to the audience. A slight episode is introduced near the beginning of El mejor alcalde, el rey. The gracioso, a rude peasant, asserts that he is in love with the heroine and that she is going to marry him, but

as no one takes him very seriously, he soon decides to give up his imaginary claim and disinterestedly helps the real lover in all his difficulties. The episode of María and the indiano in La moza de cántaro is rather prominent and has little connection with the main plot. After killing Don Diego she flees in disguise and secures employment as a servant from a man who has recently returned from the Indies. He falls in love with her and she has considerable difficulty in convincing him that she is honorable and self respecting. In Dineros son calidad, Otavio's encounter with the ghost of a dead king serves only to prophecy his ultimate success. Likewise the introduction at the end of the last act of El molino of a princess who is married to a prince seemingly to soothe his wounded vanity, is an incident unnecessary to the main plot.

Ricardo. Pues ¿eso importa ?

Tristán.

Al tiempo que el concierto

Hice por los tres cientos solamente,
Era pra matar, como fué llano.
Un Teodoro criado, mas no conde.
Teodoro conde es cosa diferente,
Y es menester que el galardón se aumente;
Que más cosa tendrá matar un conde
Que cuatro o seis criados, que están muertos,
Unos de hambre y otros de esperanza,
¹
Y no pocos de envidia .

Zulema. Los pies y manos que besamos pido.

Maestre. ¿Qué miras alrededor ?

Tienes miedo, o no te agradan

En tu embajada testigos ?

Zulema. Ser segreta me embajada,

E por eso soplicalde,

Vosancé, que al esgocharla

Ser de brosona a brosona

Porque estamos de emportancia¹.

In El mejor alcalde, el rey, the gracioso, a swineherd, uses frores for flores, maeso for maestro, and igreja for iglesia. With the exception of so used for soy, no peculiarities of pronunciation are to be found in the speech of the other characters of similar social status.

The diction of the students who are arguing over celestial bodies in El bobo del colegio is very appropriate.

Gerardo. Digo que los cuerpos celestiales

¹ Obras XI, p. 6, c. B, l. 28.

Han dudado , Riselo, los antiguos
Utrum sint animata an non.

Marin.

Escucha.

Gerardo. Los que pensaron que animados eran,
 Imaginaron que efectivamente,
 Sumovimiento procedía del ánima.

Riselo. Pues eso la verdad lo contradice;
 Que ni vegetativa, sensitiva,
 Ni racional virtud existe en ellos.

Gerardo. Si por agentes intelectuales
 Inteligencias digo movedoras
 Animadas parecen, no me espanto.

Riselo. Esas inteligencias no se juntan
 A los orbes celestes, como al cuerpo
 Se junta por unión formal al alma
 Y sustancial información.
¹
 Etc.,etc.

In El acero de Madrid, Beltran is clever enough
 to use a few latin medicinal expressions so appropriately

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 191, c. A, l. 7.

to understand the Spanish spoken at the period in which¹
the action of the play is supposed to have occurred .

Occasionally classical allusions are made by characters who in all probability would have been entirely incapable of them. Menéndez y Pelayo calls attention to the fact that in El mejor alcalde, el rey, Lope is sometimes carried away by his poetic vein and has the lovers refer to stories of Greek mythology, unsuited to² both the time and the place . He does the same thing, however, apparently with intention in Al pasar del arroyo.³ Benito and Jacinta, both children of noblemen, have been reared from infancy by peasants, have always had persons of inferior rank for associates and friends and are both entirely ignorant of their origin; yet their language is consistently elevated. In talking of the kind of life that she prefers, Jacinta says,

Mas precio en el soto o selva
Seguir de Atalanta el paso,
Sin que al oro el rostro vuelva
Hasta que el sol al ocaso

1 Obras VII, p. lxxxvii.

2 Obras VIII, p. lxi.

3 B.A.E. XXIV. 1619 (Hennig)

En oro o sangre se envuelva;

¹

Etc.

and Benito in the next act says,

También conocí al Mendoza,

Ilustrísimo sugeto

Para versos de Virgilio

²

Para excelencias de Homero.

In El nuevo mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón,
the Indians talk among themselves in Spanish, the only possible way to make their lines understood by a Spanish audience, but they also refer to characters of classical mythology.³ This play, however, contains an excellent illustration of the dignified diction which Lope says should be used in persuasion. Colón is appealing to Ferdinand and Isabella for aid for his projected voyage to the Indies. He begins by referring to the recent capture of Granada and the greatness of Spain, saying

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 338, c. A, 1. 12.

2 B.A.E. XXIV, p. C, 1. 27.

3 Obras XI, p. 357, c. A, 1.8.

that it is now time for the monarchs to conquer a new world. He follows with his scientific proof of the probable existence of islands to the west and then gives his strongest argument in favor of the expedition.

Yo iré si tú, señor, me das ayuda
 A conquistar los indios, los idólatras;
 Que es justo que a la fe cristiana nuestra
 Reduzca un Rey que se llamó católico,
 Con la prudente y más dichosa Reina
 Que han visto las edades de oro antiguas.

.....

Don Fernando. Colón ¿qué has menester para esta empresa ?

Colón. Señor, dineros, que el dinero en todo
 Es el maestre, el norte, la derrota,
 El camino, el ingenio, industria y fuerza,
 El fundamento y el mayor amigo ¹.

Very eloquent is the advice of Don García to his daughter in Las famosas asturianas, when he learns that she is one of the hundred women to be given to the Moors. He especially urges her to do all that she can for the

1 Obras XI, p. 353, c. B, l. 13.

advancement of the Christian faith ¹ .

The diction of kings is always dignified and expressive of authority and influence with the possible exception of the unfortunate Bamba ² . In El mejor alcalde, el rey, the sovereign speaks thus:

Cuando pierde de su punto
La justicia, no se acierta
En admitir la piedad
Divinas y humanas letras
Dan ejemplo: es traidor
Todo hombre que no respeta
A su rey, y que habla mal
De ^{su} persona en ausencia ³ .

A speech by Nuño, father of the heroine of this same play, is an excellent example of the modest eloquence Lope says is suited to old men.

Señor, a estas piedras digo

1 Obras VII, p. 211, c. A, l. 1.

2 La comedia de Bamba.

3 Obras VIII, p. 328, c. B, l. 14.

Mi dolor, y ellas conmigo
 Sienten cuán mal me tratáis;
 Que, aunque vos las imitáis
 En dureza, mi desvelo,
 Huye siempre del consuelo,
 Que anda a buscar mi tristeza;
 Y aunque es tanta su dureza
 Piedad les ha dado el cielo.¹

The speeches of El Veinticuatro in La niña de plata are
 by no means eloquent or modest but serve very well to
 depict the character of a miserly old man.

Cásala de su mano Enrique
 Por pagar los servicios
 Dale de dote veinte mil ducados,
 Sin cuatro para joyas, y el Maestre
 Su hermano del Infante, me da un hábito,
 Cosa tan deseada de mi pecho
 Y que a mis enémigos dará envidia.²

1 Id., p. 321, c. B, 1.5.

2 Obras IX, P. 359, c. B, 1.22.

Fine examples of the eloquence of lovers can be found in almost any of the plays studied, among the best being the following lines from La estrella de Sevilla.

D. Sancho.

¿Cuándo el blanco rocío
Que vierten mis dos ojos,
Sol que alumbrando sales
En concha de corales;
De que ha formado amor los labios rojos,
Con apacibles calmas
Perlas harás que engasten nuestras almas ?

Estrella. Si como mis deseos
Los tiempos caminaron,
Al sol aventajaron
Los pasos giganteos
Y mis dulces empleos
Celebrara Sevilla,
Sin envidia celosa,
Amante venturosa,
La regalada y terna tortolilla
Que con arrullos ronc

Tálamos hace de los huecos troncos¹.

Lines equally beautiful may be found in the opening scene² of El remedio en la desdicha.

Lope emphasizes most of all, however, the language used in soliloquies. These are to be found frequently in his plays and are very seldom commonplace; on the contrary the audience is shown the inner, undisguised emotions of a character. The soliloquy of Don Sancho after reading the king's order that says that he must kill Busto is especially good.

(Lee)" Al que muerte habéis de dar,

Es, Sancho, a Busto Tabera !

-¡Válgame Dios! ¡Qué esto quiera!

¡Tras una suerte un azar!

Toda esta vida es jugar

Una carteta imperfeta,

Mal barajada, y sujeta

A desdichas y a pesares;

Que es toda en cientos y azares

1 Obras IX, p. 134, c. B, l. 15.

2 Obras XI, p. 170, c. B.

Como juego de carteta.

Pintada la suerte ví;

Mas luego se despintó,

Y el naípe se barajó

Para darme muerte a mí.

.....

Pues ¿Qué debo obedecer ?

La ley que fuera primero.

Mas no hay ley que a questo obligue.

Mas si hay; que aunque injusto el Rey,

.....

A él después Dios le castigue.

Mi loco amor se mitigue;

Que, aunque me cueste disgusto,

Acudir al Rey es justo:

Busto muera, Busto muera,

Pues ya no hay quien decir quiera;

" Viva Busto, viva Busto."

Perdóname, Estrella hermosa;

Que no es pequeño castigo

Perderte y ser tu enemigo

¿Qué he de hacer ? ¿ Puedo otra cosa ?¹

1 Obras IX p. 146, c. B, l. 7.

IV

Versification

The verse form, according to the Arte nuevo, should be appropriate to the subject matter and five particular types are mentioned; décima for complaints, sonetos to be used by those waiting, romance and octavo both for narration, and redondillas for love. These are the forms most frequently used by Lope and usually each expresses the ideas that he says are suited to it.

Luzán (quoted by Morel-Fatio) remarks that the assignment of certain meters to certain subjects is very artificial and inconsistent with Lope's assertions that everything in a play should resemble the truth. Neither can he understand how the poet is to make an absolute division between the different kinds of subject matter, for in complaints there may be narration or serious things, and in love affairs any or all of the types he mentions may be found. Morel-Fatio answers that conventions rule in all theaters and that Lope's¹ classification of meter and its application is sound.

¹ Morel-Fatio: Op. cit., p. 398.

Some latitude is permitted in the choice of verse forms, however, for while he says redondillas are suited to love, Lope does not say they are inappropriate for other things, and much of the ordinary conversation that does not belong under any of his classifications of subject matter is written in redondillas.

Décimas are to be found in all the plays studied and are very common in El nuevo mundo etc. and El sol parado. Menéndez y Pelayo says that they appear more frequently in the later plays than in the earlier ones and so noticeably that the extent to which they occur may be taken as one indication of the date of the composition of a particular play¹. This seems to be the case. The following lines from La moza de cántaro, a part of Doña María's complaint over her misfortunes are quite appropriately décimas.

Flores, que a la blanca aurora
 Con tal belleza salís
 Que superbios competís
 Con el mismo sol que os dora,
 Toda la vida es un (sic) hora:

1 Obras X, p. lxxxi.

Como vosotros me ví,
 Tan arrogante salí;
 Sucedió la noche al día:
 Mirad la desdicha mía
Aprended, flores de mí
 Etc.

In La dama boba, a series of laments are addressed to Celia. All are in décimas though this one of Feniso's praises the beauty of nature.

Ya se rien estas fuentes,
 Y són perlas las que dieron
 Lágrimas, con que sintieron
 Vuestros cristales ausentes;
 Ya las aguas sus corrientes
 Hacen instrumentos claros
 Para poder celebraros;
 Todo se anticipa a veros,
 Y todo intenta ofreceros²
 Con que procure alegraros .

1 B.A.E. XXXIV, p. 557, c. A, l. 43.

2 Id., p. 304, c. C, l. 30.

The conversation between Estrella and Don Sancho in the last act of La estrella de Sevilla is in decimas and is unusual in that until the last three lines are reached, Estrella's speeches give the first half of each line and Don Sancho's the riming half.

Estrella. Véte y déjame.

D. Sancho. No es bien.

Estrella. Vive y líbrate.

D. Sancho. No es justo.

Estrella. ¿Por quién mueres?

D. Sancho. Por mi gusto.

Estrella. Es crueldad.

D. Sancho. Honor también.

Estrella. ¿Quién te acusa?

D. Sancho. Tu desdén.

Estrella. No lo tengo.

D. Sancho. Piedra soy.

Estrella. ¿Estas en ti?

D. Sancho. En mi honra estoy.

Y te ofendo con vivir.

Estrella. Pues véte, loco, a morir;

Que a morir también me voy.

1 Obras IX, p. 155,, c. B, 1.25.

The rime scheme of the décima varies sometimes and quintillas may replace it, a frequent occurrence in El castigo sin venganza¹. There is neither ground for criticism nor particular appropriateness in the use of décimas by the king in La estrella de Sevilla, when he is talking of the town and its inhabitants.

Muy agradecido estoy
 Al cuidado de Sevilla,
 Y conozco que en Castilla
 Soberano rey yo soy.
 Desde hoy reino, pues desde hoy
 Sevilla me honra y ampara;
 Que es cosa evidente y clara
 Y es averiguada rey
 Que en ella no fuera rey².
 Si en Sevilla no reinara .

Not all the sonetos in Lope's plays are spoken by some one waiting. In the course of a rather short conversation in La moza de cántaro three are read or

1 See Obras XV, p. 257, c. B, l. 45.

2 Obras IX, p. 129, c. A, l. 1.

¹
 recited . In La niña de plata Don Juan reads a sonnet
 from a paper that he receives . Diana in El perro
²
del hortelano dictates one to her secretary . It seems
 to be a form as well suited to soliloquy as the décima,
 in which application it probably fulfills Lope's
 requirement. There are six such uses of it in El perro
del hortelano, and several in El sol parado. Xarifa
 in La envidia de la nobleza, while waiting for a servant
 to bring her a mirror, laments in a sonnet what she
 considers her mistake.

El sátiro, que vió primero el fuego
 Resplandeciente, claro y luminoso,
 Fuéle a abrazar alegre y codicioso;
 Pero abrasado se detuvo luego.
 Miró unas flores, que el ameno riego
 Fertilizaba de un arroyo hermoso,
 Y dijo: ¡Oh campo alegre y deleitoso!
 ¡Porqué os dejé de aquella lumbre ciego ?
 Tal yo, que con mi engaño me aconsejo
 Y de todo el sentido me despejo

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 556, c. A, ll. 10 and 37, c. B, l. 13.

2 Obras IX, p. 338, c. B. l. 12.

3 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 344, c. C, l. 41.

Sigo mi daño, y de mi bien me alejo
 Mi muerte busco, y de vivir me enojo;
 Las flores de oro en la corona de¹jo,
 Y al fuego de amor el alma enoja¹.

La fuerza lastimosa contains a sonnet with echoes.

Rey.	Peligro tiene el más <u>probado</u>	<u>Vado</u> ;
	Quien no teme que el mal le <u>impida</u>	<u>Pida</u> ,
	Mientras la suerte le <u>convida</u>	<u>Vida</u> ,
	Y goce el bien tan 'sin <u>cuidado</u>	<u>Dado</u> .
	Mas cuanto en más <u>afortunado</u>	<u>Hado</u>
	Fuerza y poder se <u>descomida</u>	<u>Mida</u> ,
	Cuán presto adonde más <u>resida</u>	<u>Es ida</u>
	La gloria vil deste <u>prestado</u>	<u>Estado</u>
	La honra puede tu <u>estandarte</u>	<u>Darte</u> ,
	Amor, por quien la <u>rescatada</u>	<u>Atada</u>
	Tuvo en el fuego que <u>reparte</u> ,	<u>Parte</u> .
	Fue la defensa, aunque <u>ordenada</u> ,	<u>Nada</u> ,
	Pues es por tí, sin <u>remediarte</u>	<u>Arte</u> ,
	La cuerda, loca; la <u>encerrada</u>	<u>Errada</u> ² .

1 Obras XI, p. 5, c. B, l. 11.

2 Obras XIV, p. 22, c. B, l. 15.

in La niña de plata, there is a sonnet that has numerous parallels not only in Spanish but also in other languages.

Chacon. Un soneto me manda hacer Violante,
 Que en mi vida no he visto en tanto aprieto,
 Catorce versos dicen que es soneto;
 Burla burlando van los tres delante.
 Yo pensé que no hallara consonante,
 Y estoy a la mitad de otro cuarteto;
 Mas si me veo en el primer terceto,
 No hay cosa en los cuartetos que me espante.
 Por el primer terceto voy entrando
 Y parece que entré con pie derecho,
 Pues fin con este verso le voy dando.
 Ya estoy en el segundo, y aun sospecho
 Que voy los tres versos acabando;
 Contad si son catorce, y está hecho.¹

1 Obras IX, p. 354, c. B, 1.6 .

Menendez y Pelayo says that at least two sonnets similar to this of Lope's were in existence before La niña de plata was written. The oldest is by Baltasar de Alcaza and the other by Pedro de Espinosa. Among French imitations are those of Regnier-Desmarias and of Enrique Meilhac. In English, Edwards has written the same kind of a sonnet and an Italian one has been attributed to Marino. Some Spanish imitations are those of D. Tomas González Carvajal, of D. Jaime Balmes and of Bachiller Francisco de Osuna. Op. cit., p. cxiii and ff.

A Mexican imitation is that of Anastasio Ochoa. Pimental: Historia critica de la literatura y de las ciencias en Mexico, Mexico, 1833. p. 396.

Romances and octavas are both used for narration although the former are more common and like redondillas serve also for other subjects. In El castigo sin venganza Aurora uses them quite appropriately in telling her story to the marquis.

.....

Yo te confieso que quise
 Al conde, de quien lo fui
 Mas traidor que el griego Ulises.
 Creció nuestro amor el tiempo;
 Mi casamiento previne
 Cuando fueron por Casandra
 En fe de palabras firmes,
 Si lo son los de los hombres
 Cuando sus iguales sirven ¹.

Octavas are used by Doña María in La moza de cántaro for simple narration.

Cantaban othas con alegre brío,

¹ Obras XV, p. 260, c. B, l. 7.

Y yo, Leonor, lloraba mis enojos:
 Lavaba con lo mismo que lloraba,
 Y al aire de suspiros lo enjugaba.
 Y, el claro rostro en púrpura bañado
 Las nubes ilustraba de occidente
 De aquel vario color tornasolado;
 Cuando despierta ~~ya~~ del occidente
 Saqué la ropa, y de uno y otro lado,
 Asiendo los extremos, la torcimos,
 Y a entapizar los tendedores fuimos ¹.

and by Friso in Pobreza no es vileza,

.....
 Durlán, bella ciudad in Picardía,
 Por el famoso conde fué sitiada,
 En cuyo rebellin se vió aquel día
 España de laureles coronada,
 Y en uno y otro asalto y batería
 De felices vitorias ilustrada,
 Donde ganó Mendoza nombre eterno

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 561, c. C, l. 26.

1

Para todo lugar, plaza y gobierno .

In one speech of El remedio en la desdicha the octavas are esdrújulos.

Abindarraéz.

Agora que a mi bien no pone obstáculo
 La fortuna cruel, y mis pies débiles
 Los rayos de mi sol llevan por báculo,
 Que el llanto enjugan de mis ojos flébiles ,
 Haciendo el alma verdadero oráculo,
 Mis esperanzas, hasta agora estériles
 Tendrán, ya libres de otra fuerza bélica,
 Fin en los brazos de mi esposa angélica .
2

In some lines of No son todos ruisenores, redondillas are used where octavas or romances would be preferable according to the Arte nuevo.

Juan. Que no he pasado después

1 B.A.E. LII, p. 247, c. B, l. 17.

2 Obras XI, p. 194, c. B, l. 1.

Que salí de Barcelona
 Donde en la nave Cardona
 Corrimos tormenta un mes
 (~~M~~ dimos en Berbería .)

Vice versa the romances of one of Don Joan's speeches
 in La moza de cantaro should be in redondillas.

Como das, Isabel mía
 (¡ Mía dije? ¡Ay Dios! que miento)
 En pensar que por ser pobre
 Te busco, te sigo y ruego,
 Dilatas a mis verdades
 El justo agradecimiento
 Pues yo te juro, Isabel,
 Que por quererte, despreció
 La mas hermosa mujer,
 Donaire y entendimiento
 Que tiene aq²ueste lugar;

Tercetos are for serious things. Though not unusual

1 Obras XV, p. 101, c. B, 1, 11.

2 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 557, c. C, 1. 63.

.....

Oh bien sufrido tormento!
 Oh bien lograda esperanza,
 Bien fundada confianza,
 Bien nacido pensamiento!
 Alegres pesares míos,
 Discreta y justa porfía,
 Cuerda y famosa osadía
 Venturosos desvaríos!
 Dulce amor, dulce penar,
 Dulcísimo padecer,
 Felicísimo esperar!

When made necessary by a change of subject matter, the meter may change within a scene. Thus in the first act of the play just mentioned, the lovers Abindarraéz and Jarifa, each ignorant of the other's presence, speak alternately in décimas, but on seeing each other change to redondillas. In El mejor alcalde, el rey, Sancho begins with a soliloquy in décimas. Elvira enters and in an aside also uses them, but the conversation that

1 Obras IX, p. 178, c. B, l. 4.

follows is in redondillas.

Sancho. Hallarme quisiera a mí
Que me perdí desde ayer;
Pero ya me vengo a ver,
Pues me vengo a hallar en tí.

Elvira. Pienso que a qyudarme vienes
A ver si los puedo hallar.

Sancho. ¡Bueno es venir a buscar
Lo que en las mejillas tienes!¹

In the last scene of the last act of this same play, the length of the romances changes from six syllables to eight, an unusual but not especially significant occurrence.

A six line stanza in El castigo sin venganza is both preceded and followed by redondillas². In La comedia de Bamba, redondillas change to sonetos in the same scene³. In Las famosas asturianas, octavas give way to romances

1 Obras VIII, p. 298, c. A, l. 19.

2 Obras XV, p. 245, c. B, l. 48.

3 Obras VII, p. 53, c. A, l. 20.

1

in an ordinary conversation and tercetos change to quintillas
 in a similar scene in Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio.²

While the verse forms most commonly found in Lope's plays are those mentioned in the Arte nuevo, they are not the only ones he uses. Blank verse occurs with considerable frequency, there being in one scene in El remedio en la desdicha forty-eight lines of it in esdrújulos. Alexandrines are not rare and occasionally a silva or cancion appears. Almost every play contains one or more popular songs, many of them quite musical and catchy. The variety and combinations of meters is indeed very great.

1 Op. cit., p, 198, c. B, 1. 6.

2 Op. cit., p. 233, c. B, 1. 29 .

V

¹
Women . Questions of honor.

Women should not do or say unwomanly things, and they should always be spoken of respectfully. If they change costumes, as they may do, for the masculine disguise usually pleases, they should do so modestly.

Montalbán says that Lope was always extremely annoyed by any depreciating remarks about women, considering such as offense parallel to a display of bad taste in dress or manners², and Fitzmaurice-Kelly adds "...that we should have guessed as much from the evidence of his plays...."

Don Diego, even when dying, can only speak respectfully of Doña Mari'a, his slayer.

¹ Since the completion of this study, there has come to the writer's notice the existence of an article on the disguising of Lope de Vega's heroines by Morel-Fatio, Bulletin Hispanique, Vol. II, p. 197

² Montalbán: Fama postuma. B.A.E. XXIV, p. XV, l. 39.

³ Fitzmaurice-Kelly: Taylorian Lecture, London, 1902

Don Diego.

Mas no la dejéis prender

Fulgencio. Yo pienso que habrá salido.

Pero ¿porque no queréis

Que la prendan ?

Don Diego. Ha vengado

Las canas de un padre honrado.

Esto en viendole diréis.....¹

All of Lope's heroines are by no means models of virtue. Many of them are quite daring and although frequently the victims of the severe exactions of the pundonor, none of them is of that helpless languishing type, sometimes met with in romantic literature, whose death is the tragic dénouement of some disappointment. Lope always encourages the audience to be charitable towards those who are not admirable and provides extenuating circumstances for their shortcomings. Casandra in El castigo sin venganza is the victim of events that to a certain extent are beyond her control. A young woman, she has been married to a duke who does not care for her and quite naturally as a result

1 La moza de cántaro; B.A.E. XXIV, p. 551, c. C, l. 25.

of his neglect she is attracted by Federico. Her punishment may be just but one never feels anything but sympathy for her in her unhappiness. In El remedio en la desdicha, Alara is so harshly treated by her husband that any possible criticism of her conduct is forgotten in a feeling of repulsion at his brutality and of relief at her rescue. Filena in El sol parado is perhaps the most unprincipled of any of Lope's feminine characters, but she is nevertheless presented as a charming, vivacious woman who is inexpressably wearied by the monotonous commonplaceness of her surroundings and her stupidly disagreeable husband. The selfishness of Diana in El perro del hortelano is irritating to the audience and is represented as being a cause of suffering to innocent people. In one case, however, it is explained by the jealous affection of the heroine for a man of supposedly inferior rank, and in the other by the injustice that the princess thinks has been done to her. The deliberate falsehoods that Amaranta tells in El verdadero amante are explained by her affection for the hero of the play even though she involves him in serious difficulties.

Most of the women in Lope's plays, however, are examples of constancy even under the most trying circumstances.

Such are Estrella in La estrella de Sevilla, Elvira in El mejor alcalde, el rey, Clara in Porfiar hasta morir, Doña Mayor in El médico de su honra and Jarifa in El remedio en la desdicha. Isabela in La fuerza lastimosa rises to the most sublime heights of self-sacrifice when she is willing to give up her own life that her husband, in obedience to the king's command, may marry another woman. Her non-resistance is only surpassed by that of Doña Mayor in El médico de su honra.

In Las famosas asturianas, Lope introduces an Amazon type that would have been ridiculous in the hands of an ordinary playwright, but which he keeps, as Menéndez y Pelayo says, within the poetic sphere¹. The same spirit of self-reliance that characterizes the heroine of this play is displayed also by Doña María in La moza de cántaro, for, after avenging her father's honor, she lives disguised as an unprotected servant girl. Both she and La niña de plata are extremely modest and self-respecting. The vivacious pelisa of El acero de Madrid is more clever than her lover in devising means² of escape from her eagle-eyed relatives, and La dama

1 Obras VII, p. LXXXVII

2 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 366, c. B, l. 1.

boba is shrewder than her friends suspect and very witty^{1.}

Masculine disguise for women appears in seven out of thirty plays observed and in as many proportionally of those written before 1609 as in the later ones. It is a device not unusual in comedias by other authors of the period and must have been, as Lope says, pleasing to the audience. La moza de cántaro flees disguised as a man partly to conceal her identity from any officers of justice who might follow her and partly because it was the only way a noblewoman might travel unattended. Isabela in La fuerza lastimosa appears in several scenes at the end of the last act in masculine attire quite befitting the commanding position she finally holds. The appearance of one of the less important characters wearing her clothes and humiliatingly uncomfortable is ludicrous in the extreme.² In El acero de Madrid a similar exchange of clothing is made. Belisa flees from her father's house disguised as the gracioso,³ while that character escapes as a woman. Sometimes the device seems to be introduced merely to please the

1 See B. A. E. XXIV, p. 308, c. C, l, 26

2 Obras XIV, p. 346, c. A, l. 6.

3 See B. A. E. XXIV, p. 385, c. A, l. 4.

audience and not as an essential part of the play. Near the end of Pobreza no es vileza, the incident is introduced of a woman disguising herself and starting out to kill the lover who she thinks has deserted her. She immediately encounters him, they fight, she is wounded, her identity is disclosed, and a reconciliation is effected. The same thing may be said of the appearance of a princess in disguise in the closing scenes of Dineros son calidad. No son todos ruiseñores and La fortuna merecida are the other plays that employ this device.

It has been said that none of the women in Lope's plays dies heart-broken and some, especially among the minor characters, seem quite content to marry anyone who may be offered to them. Diana in El perro del Hortelano provides a husband for the maid who is her rival, an arrangement finally accepted by all concerned.¹

Morel-Fatio considers Lope's enumeration of the subjects most pleasing to the public incomplete,² but if the term cosas de honra is interpreted to mean, as Canovas del Castillo suggests, cosas o sucesos caballerescos, it is an important element not only in most of Lope's

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p 559, c.A, l. 12

2. Morel-Fatio: op. cit., p. 403, n. 325.

plays, but also in those of his contemporaries.¹ . El castigo sin venganza and El médico de su honra are both tragedies that have as the sole argument the punishment inflicted on those whose honor has been tarnished by suspicion. The laws of the avenging of an insult are so inflexible that nothing but the death of all persons involved can remove the opprobrium. In the one play the duke is compelled to kill not only his wife for whom he has little affection, but also his son, the center of all his hopes and ambitions. In the other play in spite of Doña Mayor's innocence she must be killed because the attentions of a prince whom she repeatedly rejects arouse the jealousy and suspicion of her husband. The prince takes refuge in flight and the king, approving the husband's action, immediately marries him to another woman. A similar plot with a more reasonable conclusion, however, is that of Porfiar hasta morir. The lady ignores the declarations of the enamored troubadour and her husband, convinced of her innocence, imprisons and kills the unhappy suitor. The usual attitude of the relatives of a character upon whose honor a reflection has been cast is illustrated by a speech of Nuño to his daughter

1 Antonio G' anovas del Castillo, Op. Cit., p.v.

Elvira after she has been abducted by Don Tello in
El mejor alcalde, el rey.

1.....

y es cosa tan torpe y fea
 La deshonra en el honrado
 Que aun a mí, que el ser te ha dado,
 Me obliga a que no te vea.

.....

Quien tan mala cuenta ha dodo
 De si, padre no me llame;
 Porque hija tan infame,
 (Y no es mucho que esto diga)
 Solamente a un padre obliga
 A que su sangre derrame ¹.

La niña de plata has the happiest conclusion to events reflecting on the character of the heroine. Doña Maria has an entirely different problem to solve. Don Diego has struck her aged father. Her brother, the natural avenger of such an insult, is in Flanders. The only satisfactory solution she can think of is to kill the offender herself. She immediately executes her plan

with the evident approval of everyone concerned¹. The honor of the clan compells all the relatives of Zelindo to come to his aid in capturing Xarifa, in La envidia de la nobleza, and the Maestre de Calatrave is in duty bound to protect knights who seek his aid. The plot develops into a fierce struggle for supremacy between two families². Points of honor are strictly observed between enemies in La amistad pagada. A Roman soldier vies with a native chieftain in the exchange of chivalrous compliments and favors³. In El remedio en la desdicha, a captive Moor is released by the Christian alcalde for a plazo of three days at the expiration of which he conscientiously returns⁴. La fortuna merecida and La fuerza lastimosa furnish illustrations of a high sense of personal loyalty to the king on the part of the leading characters. The protagonist of the former frequently endangers his own life to save the king. He is continually rewarded and given the highest honors, yet the princess recoils when it is suggested that she marry him and insists

1. La moza de cantaro, B.A.E. XXIV. p 551, c. B. 1.5

2. Obras XI, p. 8. c.A, 1.3.

3. Obras VII, p 37.

4. Obras XI, p. c.A, 1.6.

that he can never be her equal in rank. La fuerza lastimosa, an adaptation of an old legend, shows the undisputed authority of a king over his vassals. It is his command that Don Enrique kill his wife and no one doubts that the command must be obeyed. The manner of her execution, however, is not stipulated and the least barbarous way seems to be to set her adrift in a boat. Her rescue and later appearance at court are unexpected events. El mejor alcalde, el rey is an excellent study of feudal relations in the middleages. The right of a powerful noble to interfere in the personal affairs of his vassals is admitted. Their only recourse is a direct appeal to the king. Don Tello attempts to ignore the command of his sovereign and is punished, not for the injury he has done to his inferiors, but for his disobedience to the king's command.

If all the plays of the capa y espada type are considered to be concerned with cosas de honra, there is a great variety of them in Lope's theater. Believing as he did that the function of the stage was the representation of contemporary life and manners, he found abundant material for this kind of a plot in the Spain of his day. Canovas del Castillo says that, although the quarrels were not always chivalrous and the law of

honor was not always inviolable, yet the youths, gentlemen and the soldiers of the court were wont to be as quarrelsome as those depicted on the stage, spending most of their time by day and by night serenading ladies and fighting in the streets .

There are, however, other themes to be found in some of Lope's plays. The voyage of Columbus to the Indies has as a motive the christianizing of the natives. La comedia de Bamba is the story of the persistent and unprincipled ambition of Ervigio, and Lo que ha de ser states the argument in the title.

It seems to have been rather difficult for Lope to depict an absolutely despicable character such as he says a traitor should be. Only a limited number of such personages are to be found. Don Tello in La fortuna merecida consistently opposes every worthy enterprise of the hero and is consistently foiled. The brief career of Don Diego in La moza de cántaro is despicable, and another Don Tello in El mejor alcalde, el rey is the personification of cruelty. Most of the traitors are mixtures of good and bad impulses, the good usually prevailing in the end. Of such a type are the kings

1 Cánovas del Castillo: op. cit., p. xiv

in La estrella de Sevilla, La niña de plata, El molino and Lo cierto por lo dudoso. The hero in his struggle against innumerable obstacles always has the sympathy of the audience. Don Alvaro in La fortuna merecida is the most perfect example of this type in the plays studied. Others are Bernardo del Carpio in Las mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio, Abindarráez in El remedio en la desdicha and Zelindo in La envidia de la nobleza. A Moorish hero always renounces Mohammedanism and becomes a Christian before the end of a play.

VI

Impossibilities. Deceiving with the truth.

Only the likely should be imitated... and by no means should a character contradict himself in what he has said.....

Viewed in the light of seventeenth century ideas, very few improbable incidents occur in Lope's plays and the proportion is but slightly higher in those written before 1609 than in later ones. In El sol parado, an angel appears and stops the sun in its course, but the suggestion of the Biblical story probably kept contemporary criticism from calling it an impossible event¹. In the same play, a captive Christian calling on the Virgin for help is answered by a heavenly voice². In La comedia de Bamba, an angel instructs the pope as to who shall be chosen king of Spain³. Later, one appears to Bamba

1 Obras IX, p. 78, c. B, stage directions. This action, Menendez y Pelayo says, was represented in a very rude way, an angel appearing at a trap door and stopping the sun with his hand. Op. cit., p xxiii.

2. Id. p 57, c. A. l.29. See also p. 69. c. A. l.9.

3. Obras VII p. 50, c. A. l. 24.

in a vision ¹. Other impossible things happen in this play, however, that can hardly be explained on the basis of the general credulity of the age. Bamba, ignorant of the lofty position that awaits him, is startled by the fall of a crown of flowers upon him apparently from the tree beneath which he is standing. Another ² follows and then two together. Lastly, an arm appears with a golden crown and a voice is heard telling him to receive it ². He is asked to be the godfather of a child and at the baptismal ceremony it speaks declaring that he is king ³. The Indians throw the cross into the water, in El nuevo mundo etc., but another appears in its place. Two idols fall down before it, six demons come from them and the chief ⁴ speaks, surrendering himself. There is also, in this play, an unusual mingling of the historical and realistic with the personification of abstract ideas. Imagination, a figure clothed in many colors, takes Columbus before a throne on which is seated Providence accompanied on one side by the Christian religion and on the other, by Idolatry, All speak in the scene. Then a demon enters and inquires.

1 Op. Cit. p. 71 C.B. 1.2.

2. Obras Vii, p. 47, c. A. stage directions.

3 Op. Cit., p 49. c. B. 1.31

4 Obras XI, p. 378, c.A and B, stage directions

why his undisputed reign in the Indies is to be molested¹. The apparition of the dead is not uncommon in Lope's plays, says Menéndez y Pelayo², but it occurs in only two of the thirty studied. In Dineros son calidad, a mysterious voice summons Otavio to single combat with the angry ghost of King Enrique. After a short struggle the phantom explains the challenge as a mere test of Otavio's bravery, promises him that he will soon be wealthy, and vanishes³. It is Menéndez y Pelayo's opinion that, although a "radical, popular genius", Lope was rather superstitious and that the credence given to diabolical prophecies and magic arts in the fantastic parts of El caballero de Olmedo⁴ is perfectly sincere. Don Alonso, hero of this play, on leaving the house of Doña Ine's, is confronted by a shadowy figure which, on being addressed, calls itself by his name⁵. As he continues his journey a peasants song warns him of coming danger⁶.

1 Op. Cit., p. 350, c.B and ff.

2 Obras X, p. lxxxix.

3 B.A.E.XLI, p 70, c.A., l.1 and ff.

4 Obras X. p. lxxxviii.

5 Op.Cit., p 175, c.B, l. 19

6 Op. Cit., p. 181, c. A, l.3.

Most of the plays containing this element of superstition are based on history or legend that doubtless had as much or more of the fantastic in it and which would perhaps have been displeasing to the audience if shorn of its supernatural attributes. The plays most characteristic of Lope, those that depict contemporary life and manners, are entirely free from any suggestion of the miraculous.

In view of the haste with which most of Lope's plays were composed, there are surprisingly few contradictions in them. In none of those studied do the characters contradict themselves. There is a confusion of names in the third act of La niña de plata. Outside of the dialogue there is no error but Teodora is mentioned when the speaker should say Dorotea and vice versa¹. Menendez y Pelayo thinks that the existence of the autographed manuscript of this play, published in the Novena Parte de sus comedias sacadas de sus originales por el mismo (Madrid 1617) disproves Hartzzenbusch's suspicion that the last act was not entirely Lope's work.

The Arte nuevo comments on Minguel Sanchez' using the device of "deceiving with the truth". It seems to consist of speeches either true or false

1 Op. Cit p. 351, c. A. and ff.

2. Op. Cit., p. cvi.

understood by the audience and perhaps by some of the characters in the play, but misinterpreted by the one to whom they are addressed. They were undoubtedly a source of amusement to the audience. Of such a type is the speech of Riselo to Teodora in El acero de Madrid. Everyone but the conceited object of his extravagant praise sees its insincerity.

Riselo. Quiero que me haga merced
de escucharme.

Teodora. Acabe ya.

Riselo Ese monjil de estameña
Habito beato y grave;
Ese donaire suave,
Que hara' manteca una peña;
Esa dulce gravedad,
Ese claro entendimiento,
Ese honroso fundamento
De virtud y honestidad;

.....

Esa nariz rubicundo,
Que por única nariz
Merece hacerle un telliz

Que le sirviese de funda;

1

.....

A similar incident occurs in La moza de cantaro. The count, desirous of finding a means of becoming acquainted with Doña Ana, a beautiful young widow, calls on her with the pretended purpose of telling her of her late husband's debts. The friends who accompany him open their eyes in wonder at the elaborate falsehood that he so quickly fabricates.

Conde. Así se vino a encender
 Con esta pérdida el juego,
 Que perdió seis mil ducados
 Sobre palabra sugura
 De que tengo una escritura.

Doña Ana Mas enredos y cuidados
 Que día's vivio' conmigo
 Don Sebastine me dejó
 ¿Seis mil ducados?

Conde Si yo

1. B. A. E. XXIV, p 371. c A. l 20

Basto, que yo soy quien lo digo,
Y los testigos presentes.

.....

D. Juan. Ap. a Martín

¡Con que desvergüenza mientes!

.....

Doña Ana Pensé que vueseñoría
Me venía hacer merced.

Conde. Que os he de servir creed;
Que esa fué la intención mía
No os dé pena la escritura,
Puesta que fué de mayor;
Que no tiene mal fiador
La paga en vuestra hermosura .¹

The success of the scheme, however, is hindered by the lady's suspicion, confessed later to Don Juan, that the count's statements are not true². In Al pasar del arroyo we understand perfectly Lisarda's speech.

Entretanto que le hablas

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 553, c. A, l. 40 and ff.

2 Op. cit., p. 553, c. B, l. 41.

Me quiero entretener

Entre estas yerbas y plantas,

Hablando con su hortelano.¹

The hortelano is a friend of hers in disguise. In El bobo del colegio. Fulgencia recognizes Garcerán. a former suitor of hers, even though he is disguised as a fool, and addresses him without any one else present, except his servant, understanding what she means.

Garcerán.

¿Cómo os llamáis?

Fulgencia. ¿Yo? La Firme.

Garcerán. Plegue a Dios que lo seáis!

Buena estáis si firme estáis,

Como agora se confirme.

Fulgencia. Presumiendo ingratitud

Cerca de mudarme estuve

Salió el sol, pasó² la nube.

La estrella de Sevilla contains some similar speeches.

1 Op. cit., p. 399, c. A, l. 15.

2 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 195, c. C l. 24.

The officers accusing Sancho of the murder of Busto, are entirely ignorant of the royal command and demand of him his motive . He replies,

No puedo decirlo,
 Porque me encargó el secreto;
 Que como rey en las obras,
 He de serlo en el silencio.
 Y para matarme a mí,
 Basta preguntarme el por qué¹ ;

In the reference to the king, the omniscient audience might see the suggestion of the true motive.

In the same paragraph of the Arte nuevo etc. equivocal speeches are mentioned, probably the same device as "deceiving with the truth". An excellent illustration of a speech with more than one possible interpretation is found in El acero de Madrid. Beltrán, gracioso-physician gives a prescription and a ring to Belisa.

Beltrán. Sin esto, desde este día

1 Obras IX, p. 152, c. B, l. 7.

No habrá la melancolía
 De que os lamentáis aquí,
 Porque yo os quiero enviar
 Músicos, y por agora
 Esta sortija, Señora,
 De grande virtud, prestar.
 Pero también advertid
 Que sin prenda no la doy,
 Porque es, a fe de quien soy,
 Ajena.

Prudencio. Jesús! Decid.
 Qué prenda queréis por ella.

Beltrán. Basta esa vuestra, Belisa.

.....

Otavio. {Es uña de la gran bestia,
 Señor dotor ?

Beltrán. No señor;
 Esta es de cierta animal
 Que a las mujeres adora,
 Y esta es la causa agora
 Resulta en efeto igual.

Lisardo. (Ap.) En esto anduvo discreto.

Bien mi sortija le dió,
 Bien la suya le tomó¹.

Lo que ha de ser contains a prophecy that is rather obscure and may be interpreted in several ways. It concerns a prince who has been carefully guarded from danger.

Pronosticóle el sabio que tendría,
 Hasta los años veinte y nueve o treinta,
 Peligró de matarle un león, el día²
 Que llegase a mirar su faz sangrienta.

The youth strikes with his hand a picture of a lion, breaks the canvas and receives a mortal wound from a dagger lying back of it. His death seems to be the fulfillment of the prophecy, but it is discovered that a peasant who has just killed a lion in a public exhibition is the true heir to the throne, and his victory thus gives the other interpretation.

1 B.A.E. XXIV, c. C, l. 60.

2 B.A.E. XXXIV, c. B, l. 29.

VII

Figures of speech. Satire.

The figures of speech the Arte nuevo etc., emphasizes are, repetition, anadiplosis, anáfora, irony, dubitación, apostrophe and exclamation.

Several of these may be included under the general term of repetition, but it occurs in other forms than those mentioned. One that may frequently be noticed is the occurrence of a refrain, sometimes a line of a popular song, at the end of each of several strophes. In El castigo sin venganza each line of the following stanza is repeated at the end of a successive *décimas* (two *quintillas*).

En fin, señora, me veo
 Sin mí, sin vos y sin Dios;
 Sin Dios, por lo que os deseo;
 Sin mí, porque estoy sin vos;
 Sin vos, porque no os poseo¹.

¹ Obras XV, p. 259, c.A, 1. 12.

Similarly the refrain, adorando los ojos de una esclava, occurs four times as the last lines of the consecutive octavas in a speech of Andronius in La amistad pagada.¹

Anadiplosis is illustrated in Lo cierto por lo dudoso.

Rey.

Como valerse de hacer

Hechizos.

Ramiro. Hechizos son,

2

.....

Another example is from La envidia de la nobleza.

Rey.

Amor que seguro esté

Nunca le llames amor.

Amor ha de ser temor

De dos que se quieren bien;

3

.....

1 Obras VII, p. 13, c. B, l. 12.

2 Obras IX, p. 371, c. A, l. 26.

3 Obras XI, p. 11, c. B, l. 14.

Anáforas are also common. The following illustration is from El bobo del colegio.

Marín.

Díjome cierta mujer

Que estaba hechizado, y creo

Que si es hechizo un deseo,

Hechizos deben de ser.

Lisarda. Gordo estás para ser hechizado

Marín. No es hechizo ¹que enflaquece;

.....

One equally good (or rather two) may be cited from

No son todos ruiseñores.

Fernando. Perdonad a quien desea

Conquistar vuestro favor.

Una pasión amorosa,

Una esperanza engañada

Una dicha desdichada

Y una desdicha dichosa,

1 B.A.F. XXIV, p. 182, c. A, l. 24.

Han hecho, Marcela hermosa,
 Cobarde el atrevimiento
 Y atrevido el sentimiento;
 1

Several illustrations may be found in almost every play.
 The following is of another type and is the equivalent
 anaphore.

.....
 Hasta que las vista y cubra
 Del oro rubio que os traiga
 De las entrañas de Ofer
 De los abismos de Arabia;
 No con mercancías viles
 No con engañosas trazas,
 Sino con la industria sola
 De este brazo y de esta espada;
 Que con ellos pienso ser
 De estos desprecios venganza,
 De estos agravios castigo,
 Fortuna de estas desgracias,

1 Obras XV, p. 95, c. A, l. 30.

De esta muerte eterna vida,
 De esta vida heróica fama
 De esta afrenta honor, y al fin
 De esta miseria abundancia ¹.

Another very common form of anáfora consists of the repetition of a word or syllable, frequently the pronoun os, at the end of several successive lines.

Doña Juana. Cuando sin penas yo pudiera amaros
 (Que sin celos no puede ser quereros),
 Para tenerlas suspendiera el veros,
 Pues el penar por vos fuera obligaros ².

A combination of all forms is found in El verdadero amante.

¿Posible es que has de dejarme ?
 ¿Posible es que has de casarte ?
 ¿Posible es que has de trocarte ?
 ¿Posible es que has de olvidarme ? ³

1 Dineros son calidad, B.A.E. XLI, p. 60, c. C, l. 4.

2 Obras IX, p. 396, c. A, l. 29.

3 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 12, c. A, l. 24.

Irony is not so common. Diana's speech to the major-domo whom she thinks has neglected his duty is very sarcastic.

¡Muy lindo Santelmo hacéis!

¡Bien temprano os acostáis!

¡Con la flema que llegáis!

¡Qué despacio que os movéis!

Andan hombres en mi casa

A tal hora, y aun los siento

Casi en mi propio aposento

.....

Y vos, muy a lo escudero,

Cuando yo me desespero,

Ansí remedias mi agravio ¹?

Marcela, talking to the lover with whom she is angry and in whose friend she has little confidence, is equally ironical.

Riselo. Lisardo, mi amor le di.

Marcela. ;Qué buen testigo me das ²?

1 El perro del hortelano, B.A.E. XXIV, p. 341, c. B. l. 5

2 El acero de Madrid, Op. cit., p. 376, c. B, l. 23.

In another scene he is quite humorously so.

Riselo. Pues dame de merender;
 Que ha tres días que por tí
 Solo he comido un capón,
 Seis conejos y un jamón.

Marcela. Con eso vienes así.

Riselo. Estoy flaco?

Marcela. Estas perdido.

No comen mas seis tudescos.

Riselo. So (sic) treinta huevos frescos
 Para dormir he sorbido
 Hormiguillos y almendiados
 1
 No tienen numero.

Dubitacion (hesitation) occurs in the soliloquy
 of Sancho when he learns that the king has ordered him
 to kill Busto.

Perdido soy! ¿Que he de hacer?

Que al re la palabra he dado...

1 Op. cit., p. 382, c. B, 1. 6.

Y a su hermana he de perder....

.....

Si le mata por Estrella

El Rey, que servilla traba ?...

Mas no hay ley que a aquesto obligue ¹

Mas si hay, que aunque injusto el Rey...

Other illustrations may be found in El médico de su honra.

Neither of these, however, is the genuine rhetorical figure, examples of which are rare in Lope's plays.

Rather they are examples of dubitación de cosa as distinct from dubitación de palabra.³

Sancho in a speech at the beginning of El mejor alcalde, el Rey addresses the fields of Galicia in an eloquent apostrophe.

Nobles campos de Galicia

Que, a sombra destas montañas,

Que el Silentrevverdes cañas

Besar la falda codicia,

1 Obras IX, p. 146.

2 Obras XII, p. 435, c. A, l. 6.

3 A distinction made by Vosio, Diccionario Encyclopédico Hispano-Americano. 1890. Vol. VI, p. 936, c. B.

Dais sustanto a la malicia
 De flores de mil colores;
 Aves que cantáis amores,
 Fieras que audáis sin gobierno,
 ¿Habeis visto amor más tierno
 En aves, fieras, y flores ?

In La amistad pagada, one addressed to Spain by Andronius
 is very good.

¡Oh belicosa España,
 Más invencible que la libia fiera
 Nunca de Roma espada ni bandera
 Hubieras visto para tanto estrago!
 ¡Tu Numancia y Cartago,
 Y agora este León, que ya vencido
 Y sus muros por tierra derribados,
 De estas montañas sale más furioso
 Que si fuera nacido
 De la oriental Albania en sus collados!²

1 Obras VIII, p. 297, c. A, l. 1.

2 Obras VII, P. 5, c. A, l. 7.

and this from La envidia de la nobleza.

Xarifa.

¡Ay, patria del alma mía

1

Mi soledad os adora!

According to the New Art, satire should not be too evident nor should an attack arouse hatred.

There is a mild sarcasm in the first scene of La moza de cántaro when Dona Maria reads the gongoristic letter to one of her admirers.

Dona Maria.

(Lee) "Con hermosa, si bien severo, no dulce, apacible si rostro, senoria mía, mentida vista me miro vuestro desdén, absorto de toda humanidad, rigido empero, y no con lo brillante solícito, que de candor celeste clarifica vuestra faz, la hebdomada pasada."

¿Que receta es esta , di? (Rómpele)

¿Que medico te la dio?

1

Luisa. ¿Pues no entiendes culto ?

Some critics have seen in La estrella de Sevilla a representation of the execution, at the command of Phillip II, of the secretary of Don Juan of Austria. Also in El castigo sin venganza, they see pictured, the prince, Don Carlos, Isabel of Valois and Phillip II. Cánovas del Castillo refuses to believe either, but the prologue to the latter play says that it was being published because only one presentation of it on the stage had been allowed.

1 B.A.E. XXIV, p. 549, c. B, 1. 13

2 Adolfo de Castro: B.A.E. XXIV, p. xxxii.

3 Canovas del Castillo: Op. cit., p.xii.

4 Obras XV p. 236.

Conclusion

In spite of Lope's profused apologies for attempting to write a treatise on dramatic art when he himself is considered ignorant of it, the Arte nuevo etc., shows on the part of the author considerable degree of confidence in his new theories. This confidence is further exemplified by the extensive application of these ideals to his comedias. The only rule violated to any serious extent is that of unity of action. It is true that most of Lope's plays are quite complicated and involve, with the main plot, one or more lesser intrigues, but there are a few conspicuous exceptions, such as, La estrella de Sevilla, El médico de su honra and Porfiar hasta morir.

In fifteen of the plays studied royal characters have more or less important roles. The slightly higher percentage in those appearing after 1609 may imply either an increased confidence in the artistic value of the device or in its popularity.

Comedy is introduced into otherwise tragic plays by the gracioso and many of the comedies are subdued by

the suggestion or actual portrayal of tragic events, an intermingling of tragedy and comedy that Lope' declares to be true to nature.

All his plays may be divided into two parts, always closely connected by a continuity of action and the reappearance of the same characters. The solution of the plot, however, is kept from the audience until within a few scenes of the end. La niña de plata and La fuerza lastomosa are types of comedies which have the solution particularly obscured until near the end of the play. Unity of time is absolutely disregarded, as Lope says it should be. Years sometimes intervene between two acts of a play.

Lope is as careful in the observance of technical details as in the application of more general principles, and a considerable part of the Arte nuevo etc. concerns itself with questions of technique. The plays average three thousand lines each and require about two hours for their performance. It is quite probable that they were first written in prose. As far as has been ascertained, it was intended that there be no long intervals between scenes. There is evidence of a decided attempt, noticeable in plays appearing before 1609 but especially emphasized in those of a later date, to end scenes with very effective

lines. Thus, the title of the play, a proverb, a soliloquy, a forceful speech, or a rimed couplet usually closes a scene.

The first act of the comedy is generally an exemplary exposition of the plot and the second always complicates.

The diction is for the most part clear and suited to the various characters appearing in his plays, - gracioso, students, kings, old men and lovers. Soliloquies are common and usually elevated in style. The actual conversation of real people is limited as nearly as it can be done in verse. Luzan (quoted by Morel-Fatio¹) criticizes the naturalness of the use of verse in plays because few people in real life speak in redondillas and décimas. Nevertheless the Arte nuevo emphasized, and popular taste accepted the versification of comedias long before this objection was raised. With but few exceptions the suggestions made in the Arte nuevo etc. concerning verse forms are observed, but not to the extreme of excluding all others than those mentioned. Indeed, considerable latitude is permitted by the rules themselves.

Masculine disguise is a quite common device.

1 Morel-Fatio: op. Cit p 398

The heroines for the most part are attractive and spirited women sympathetically treated by the author. Estrella is a fine a type of a modest, charitable woman of idealistic temperament as may be found in literature. The pundonor, covering a wide range of applications, is almost innipresent in Lope's theater and is the supreme element in most of the tragedies.

From a seventeenth century viewpoint, there are few impossibilities in any of his plays and none at all in his best ones. Deceiving with the truth is a common device and each of the figures of speech mentioned is illustrated in some of the plays. If we except the possible application for the argument of La estrella de Sevilla and El Castigo sin venganza to intrigues of the court of Lope's time, the little satire that is to be found in his plays is of a very inoffensive nature.

There are two broad generalizations that are emphasized repeatedly in the Arte nuevo etc. and that Lope seems to have kept always in mind. The function of a comedia is to give pleasure to the audience and the stage should be the mirror of human life. His tremendous success as a playwright is ampie proof of the application of the former to his theater, and that of the latter is indicated by the assertion frequently made that his plays,

influenced by a varied personal experience, are truthful reflections of Madrid life in one of the greatest periods of Spanish history.

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